(e) TRAI has indicated in its recommendations dated 13th May, 2005 on spectrum related issues that from the analysis of level of competition it is evident that with 4 to 7 mobile operators in different service areas, there is adequate competition in almost all the service areas.

Low market share of BSNL/MTNL phone services

1844. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the market share of BSNL/MTNL in mobile phone services comparing private services;

(b) the reasons for its low share despite its infrastructure, technical back up etc;

(c) in terms of service and facilities, how private services stand head and shoulder above BSNL/MTNL; and

(d) the major measures to improve the performance, facilities, services, etc. to equate with the best private services and the time-frame before which it could be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) As on 31.07.2007, the market share of BSNL and MTNL in Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) compared to other private operators is 20.44% and 16.4% respectively in their area of operation.

(b) In all, there are 9 private GSM. mobile telephone operators providing mobile telephone services besides BSNL and MTNL. Out of these, there are four major operators *viz.* BSNL, Bharti, Vodaphone, Essar and Idea. The lower market of BSNL share in mobile has happened mainly due to capacity constraints of mobile equipment in BSNL. The present average utilization of mobile capacity of BSNL is 100%. The mobile tender of BSNL has been finalized and Advanced Purchase Order is issued to the successful bidder which is yet to be accepted by vendor. MTNL has been facing a very tough competition in Delhi and Mumbai from private telcos like Tata, Reliance, Bharti etc. Nevertheless, MTNL is giving a tough fight to the competition by taking lot of measures to improve performance, facilities and services, expand the capacity etc.

(c) GSM based cellular mobile service being provided by BSNL and MTNL are at par with other private operators. The said service of BSNL and MTNL is working satisfactorily and is, in general, meeting the Quality of Service (QoS) parameters prescribed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). The cellular mobile network of BSNL/MTNL is continuously optimized to ensure better performance.

(d) The major measures taken by BSNL and MTNL to improve the performance, facilities, services, etc. to equate with other private operators during this financial year are given in Statment-I and II respectively.

Statement-I

Major measures taken by BSNL

- Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) based Cellular Mobile Telephone Service being provided by Bharat Sanchar Nigam

Limited (BSNL) is comparable to that provided by private mobile service licensees in India.

- The said service of BSNL is working satisfactorily and is, in general, meeting the quality of Service (QoS) parameters prescribed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). The cellular mobile network of BSNL is being continuously optimized for its performance and monitoring of the network has been strengthened by BSNL to ensure performance as per the QoS parameters prescribed by TRAI.

- BSNL is, *inter alia*, provided General Pocket Radio Service (GPRS) and Multi Media Messaging Service (MMS) in all its licensed Service Areas except in some areas of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. Further, Enhanced Data Rates for Global Evolution (EDGE) has been made operational in major cities and districts headquarters. Various contents based Value Added Services and personalized Ring Back Tones are also provided to GSM based mobile subscribers. As such, BSNL is keeping pace with the advancement in technology and providing latest services to its customers.

Statement-II

Major measures taken by MTNL

- MTNL has planned to expand Cellular Mobile Network by one million each in Delhi and Mumbai in 2007-08. Purchase Order has already been placed for 750 K lines each for Delhi and Mumbai. Installation of the network has also been started. Nearly 300 BTS each in Delhi/Mumbai are being installed which will further improve coverage and capacity.

- MTNL plans to commission Convergent Billing and CRM in second quarter of 2007-08. This system provides one bill for all services to a subscriber. The system will also address customer request of services, tariff, complaint resolution etc. MTNL is providing a lot of Value Added Services for both PSTN and Mobile subscribers like news, songs, astrology, e-ticketing, SMS, Voice SMS, Internet, Broadband, IPTV etc. in line with the emerging trends.

- New Tariff plans both in land line and cellular based PCOs are launched to retain PCO holders and attract new PCO franchisees.

- MTNL is also taking care of its customers by opening Sanchar Haat, QCSC, appointment of Dealers and Agent and special care of Corporate customers. MTNL is reviewing its tariff for various products and services so as to make them customer friendly and to suit various segments of the society.

- MTNL has planned to launch 3G mobile services VOIP and Wi-MAX network in 2007-08.

- MTNL has introduced Broadband services *w.e.f.* 14.01.2005 which has been a great success in the country. 4.99 lakhs broadband connections are working as on 30.06.2007. In addition, MTNL plans to provide 10 lakhs lines capacity of broadband network in 2007-08.

- MTNL has launched IPTV services in both Delhi and Mumbai. It will help stop the churn of landline subscribers.
- Improving the legacy PSTN network by change of cables, drop wire etc. Bringing Delhi and Mumbai under 95 dialing facility (local call).

Postal subsidy for newspapers and periodicals

1845. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the procedure for subsidized postal charges to be paid by newspapers and periodicals;

(b) the reasons for requirement of all to approach the Central Authority at Delhi;

(c) the reasons for not delegating these powers to Chief Post Master General of respective State; and

(d) whether it is a fact that postal facilities of hundreds of periodicals is cancelled in the recent past?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The procedure for special rate of postage to be paid by newspapers and periodicals is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) As per the existing procedure, Divisional Superintendents of post offices and Gazetted Postmasters can register publications as registered newspapers for the purpose of transmission by post to avail special rate of postage. There is no procedure to register publications falling under the category of periodicals. Periodicals can avail special rate of postage provided they fulfill the stipulate conditions. There is no requirement to approach the Central Authority at Delhi.

(d) In all, 395 registered newspapers were not considered to be extended the special rate of postage during the year 2006-2007 and till date, since these publications did not fulfill the prescribed conditions for availing this facility.

Statement

Procedure for special rate of postage to be paid by Newspapers and Periodicals

(I) **Newspapers**

Section 9 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 provides that (1) The Central Government may make rules providing for the registration of newspapers for transmission by inland post as registered newspapers.

(2) For the purpose of such registration, every publication, consisting of wholly or in great part of political or other news, or of articles relating thereto or to other current topics, with or without advertisements, shall be deemed a newspaper, subject to the following conditions, namely:–

(a) that it is published in numbers at intervals of not more than thirty-one days; and

(b) that it has a *bona fide* list of subscribers.